

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KARACH 01954 260850Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SCS-03 MCT-01 DHA-02
AID-05 CCO-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05
SP-02 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01
A-01 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 TRSE-00 COME-00 EB-08
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O 260756Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1666
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 1954

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, PINT, PK
SUBJ: SECURITY/POLITICAL SITUATION IN SIND

REF: KARACHI 1938

1. THE CURFEW CONTINUES IN KARACHI AND HYDERABAD APRIL 26
BUT WAS LIFTED FROM 0530 TO 1030 IN BOTH CITIES AND WILL
BE LIFTED FROM 1430 TO 1830 IN KARACHI AND FROM 1430
TO 1730 IN HYDERABAD. NO SIGNIFICANT CURFEW VIOLATIONS
OR OTHER INCIDENTS ARE REPORTED IN EITHER CITY. THE NEWSPAPERS
NOW CONTAIN LITTLE MORE THAN MARTIAL LAW
INSTRUCTIONS, INTERNATIONAL NEWS, FEATURES AND SPORTS.
THEY HAVE SHRUNK IN SIZE AND DECLINING READER INTEREST
IS REFLECTED IN FALLING CIRCULATION. EVEN THE GRAPEVINE
HAS DRIED UP A BIT, AS CONTACTS WHO WERE SPEAKING FREELY
TEN DAYS AGO WHEN IT LOOKED AS IF BHUTTO'S DEMISE MIGHT
BE IMMINENT HAVE TURNED CAUTIOUS AGAIN.

2. THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR HAS EXTENDED
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FURTHER THE LIST OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND IS
ALLOWING THE FREE MOVEMENT OF MOST FOOD ITEMS
AT ALL TIMES WITHIN THE CITY OR ENTERING THE
CITY. ARMY PERSONNEL CONTINUE TO POLICE THE SHOPS
IN THE EFFORT TO PREVENT PROFITEERING, THERE ARE
REPORTED INCIDENTS OF SHOPKEEPERS BEING WARNED OR
EVEN ROUGHED UP BY THE SOLDIERS FOR RAISING PRICES.

THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO REPORT TO THE AUTHORITIES
CASES OF GOUGING BY SHOPKEEPERS.

3. IN OTHER WAYS ALSO THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR
IS USING HIS OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO IMPROVE THE ARMY'S
IMAGE TO THE PUBLIC AND CARRY OUT SOME SOCIAL REFORMS.
FOR EXAMPLE, PERSONNEL OF GOVERNMENT AND QUASI-GOVERNMENT
ESTABLISHMENT HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO REPORT PUNCTUALLY FOR
WORK. OWNERS OF MOTOR VEHICLES IN BAD REPAIR OR EMITTING
EXCESSIVE SMOKE ARE UNDER ORDERS TO CORRECT THESE
CONDITIONS IMMEDIATELY. TAXIS AND RICKSHAWS MUST
DISPLAY VALID DOCUMENTATION AND USE HONEST METERS.

4. ATTENDANCE AT OFFICES WAS REPORTEDLY GOOD APRIL 26 AND
ATTENDANCE AT FACTORIES CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED AS
COMPARED WITH APRIL 25. FACTORY WORKERS IN THE
LANDHI/KORANGI AREA TURNED OUT TODAY IN ALMOST
NORMAL NUMBERS, GENERAL TYRE REPORTING TYPICAL
ABSENTEEISM OF ABOUT 15 PERCENT, EXCEPT ON THE
SWING AND GRAVEYARD SHIFTS WHERE ATTENDANCE MOST
PLACES WAS 50 PERCENT OR LESS. IN SITE, THE TURNOUT
EVEN FOR THE DAY SHIFT IS ESTIMATED TO BE ONLY 60-70
PERCENT. THERE IS NO IDENTIFIABLE SIGN OF THE SLOW-
DOWN THAT THE PLA IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE DIRECTED ITS
MEMBERS TO PRACTICE. TRUCKS STILL ARE NOT MOVING
GOODS UP COUNTRY AND THE SUPPLY OF RAILWAY FREIGHT
CARS AVAILABLE TO SHIPPPERS IS REPORTED TO BE FAR
BELOW NORMAL.

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5. THE NEXT PHASE OF PNA STRATEGY HAS NOT YET
CLEARLY TAKEN SHAPE. MAJOR EFFORT IS BEING DEVOTED
TO PREPARATIONS FOR THE LONG MARCH OF APRIL 30 IN THE
PUNJAB. WE UNDERSTAND THE PNA IS ANTICIPATING THE
ARREST OF PIR PAGARO AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
CURRENT LEADERSHIP AND HAS ALREADY CHOSEN THE NEXT
GROUP OF LEADERS. PNA SOURCES INDICATE THAT THE PARTY
HOPES TO SEE MARITAL BECOME NATION-WIDE IN SCOPE
BECAUSE THEN, SOONER OR LATER, THE ARMY WOULD OUST
BHUTTO. THE PNA IS SAID TO BE CURRENTLY ACTIVE
IN AN EFFORT TO FOCUS WORLD ATTENTION ON EVENTS
IN PAKISTAN BUT THE ELEMENTS OF THIS EFFORT ARE
NOT YET FULLY APPARENT.

6. ALTHOUGH THE PNA AS A PARTY MAY WISH MARTIAL
LAW TO SPREAD, AND ALTHOUGH CERTAIN MEASURES BEING
TAKEN TO CONTROL PRICES AND ASSURE AMPLE SUPPLIES
OF FOODSTUFFS ARE POPULAR, THE ARMY'S POPULARITY
IS REPORTEDLY BEING ERODED IN OTHER WAYS. THE USIS

CENTER DIRECTOR IN HYDERABAD REPORTS A PERCEPTIBLE COOLER PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ARMY THERE SINCE THE SHOOTING OF CURFEW VIOLATORS APRIL 23. THERE WAS SHOCK IN KARACHI AT THE SHOOTINGS HERE APRIL 22, AND THERE IS GRUMBLING ABOUT INCONVENIENCE AND ALLEGED HIGH-HANDEDNESS HERE. MOST RECENTLY IT IS SAID THAT THE ARMY IS DISCOURAGING PEOPLE FROM GOING TO MOSQUES AND ADVISING THEM TO PERFORM THEIR PRAYERS AT HOME. THIS IS SAID TO BE A SOURCE OF SPREADING RESENTMENT.
MOORE

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